LET'S SEE THE
WEST HIGHLANDS

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Photographed by
WILLIAM S. THOMSON

Story by
EDITH MACGREGOR

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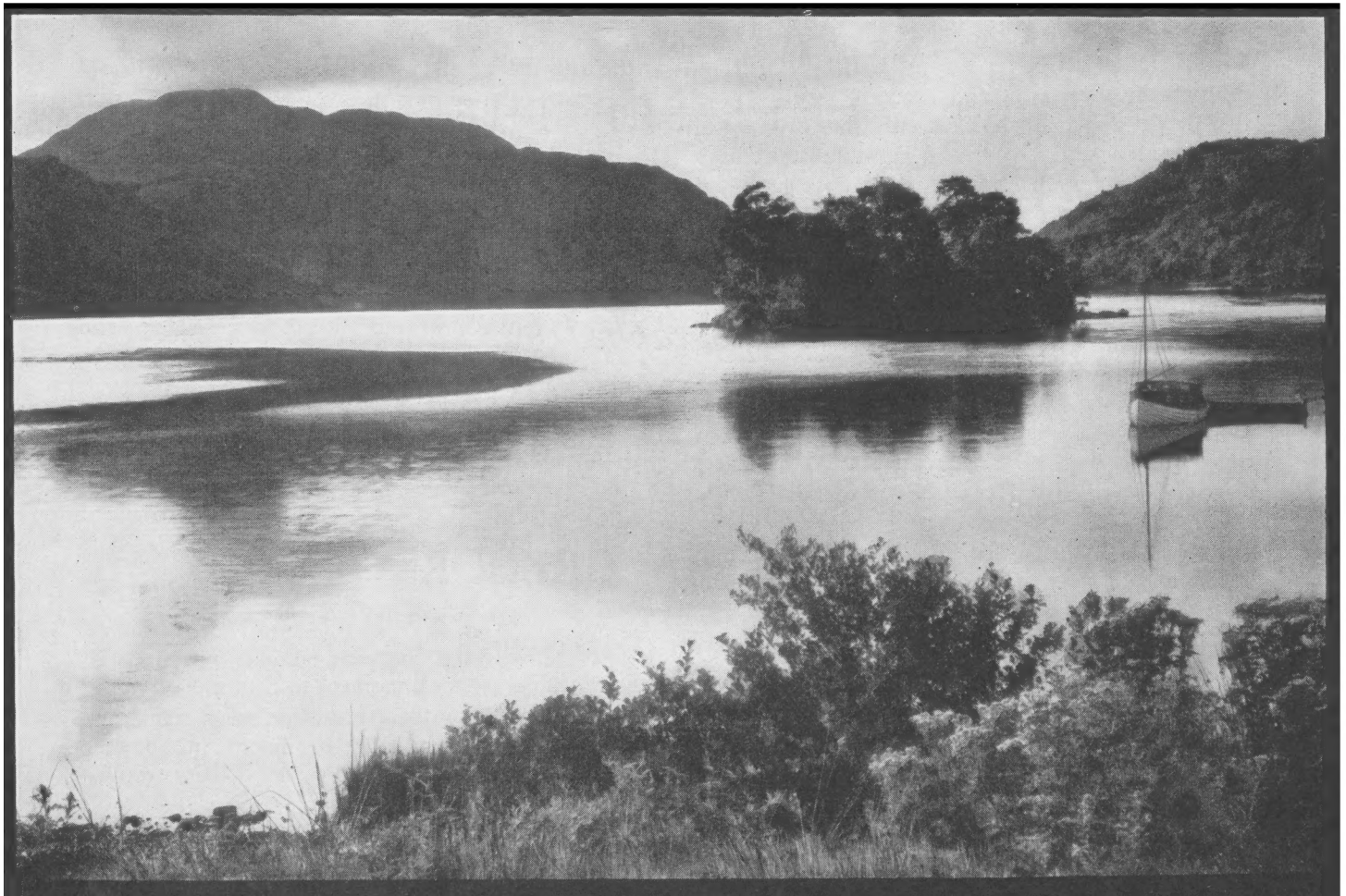


INVERUGLAS ISLE, LOCH LOMOND, LOOKING TO BEN LOMOND

THERE can be no better way of starting a journey through the West Highlands, than to take the road that leads along Loch Lomond, that wonderful loch studded with islands and surrounded by high crags and mountains, whose secret passages seem to lead off into a strange, wild, and storied land. Three great clans lived round Loch Lomond: Colquhouns, Macgregors, and Macfarlanes.

Romantic as the story of Clan Gregor, that of Clan Pharlan, who ever befriended them, is as romantic and wild—is not the moon Macfarlane's lantern? Now, from high up the mountainside round Loch Sloy down to Loch Lomond's very edge, bulldozers are blasting the site for the first big scheme of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board, but our picture (page 2) shows Inveruglas Isle, with the ruined remains of one of the ancient strongholds of Clan Pharlan, burned down by Cromwell's men in the marching and countermarching that took place during the troubled days of the Civil War.

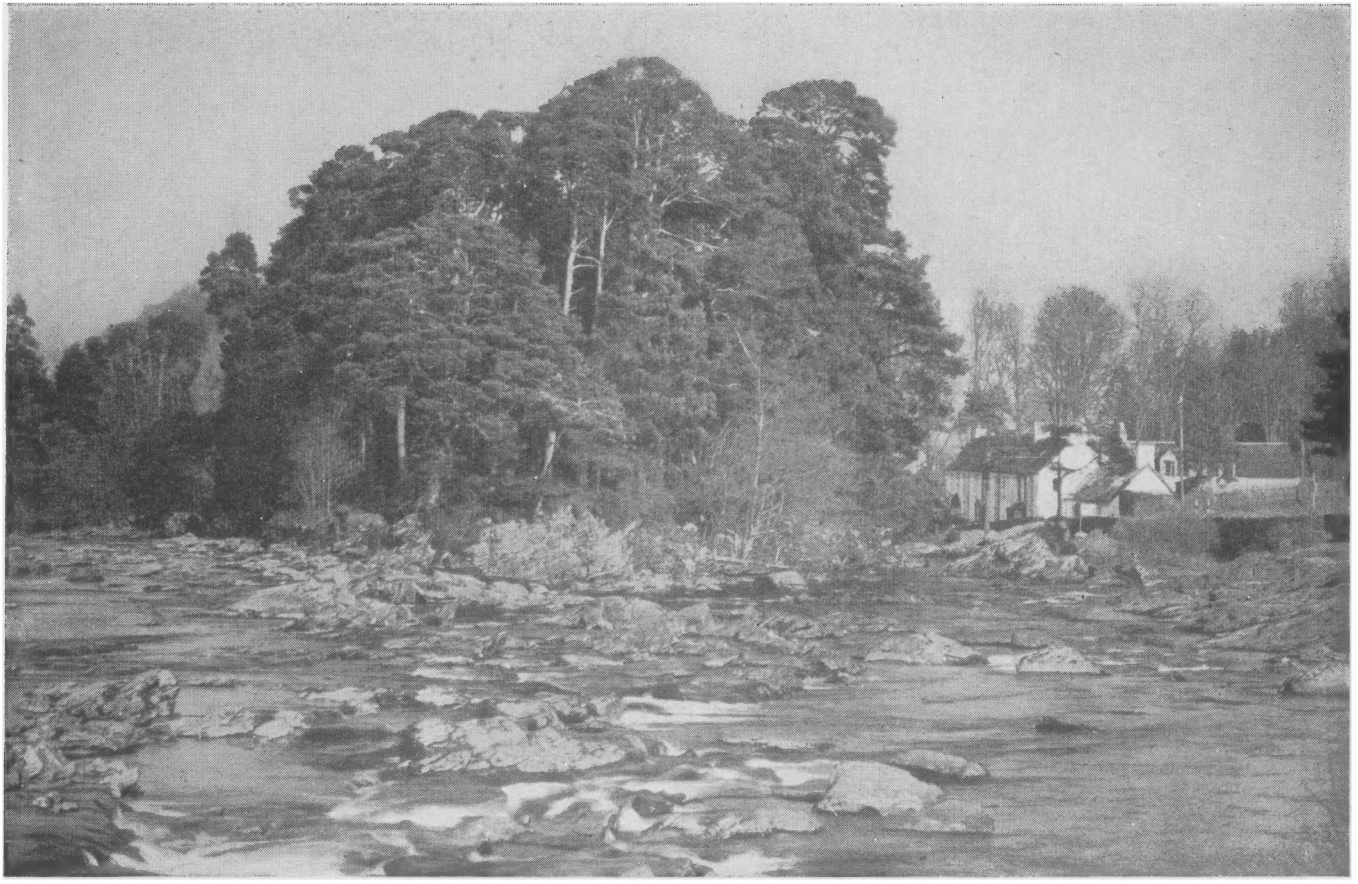
At right angles to the valley in which Loch Lomond lies, are the Trossachs (page 4) and here we are in the land of the "Lady of the Lake," and through the woods and over these mountains went Roderick Dhu and his men.

From the Trossachs one comes to Killin, a lovely village at the head of Loch Tay. Our view (page 5) shows the River Dochart, just above whose magnificent falls is the Island of Inch Bhuide, where lie the dead of the Macnabs. In the days gone by, when wild beasts roved over the countryside, and man's weapons were poor and of little avail, the dead were ferried across the water to island burial grounds, and we shall meet many such islands in our journey through the West Highlands.

Yet another glen that is worth a visit is Glen Lyon (page 6). Stretching from Fortingall to the Moor of Rannoch, here was once Macgregor country, and here, too, the Clan had its famous school of piping, which, in its heyday, rivalled the MacCrimmon School in Skye.

Before we take the road across the Moor of Rannoch, pause for a moment in Strathfillan, in the pleasant little Perthshire village of Crianlarich. Our picture (page 7) taken by moonlight, shows a peaceful, snow-covered scene.

EARLY SPRING IN THE TROSSACHS, LOOKING TO BEN VENUE



ON THE RIVER DOCHART, KILLIN

IN GLEN LYON, PERTHSHIRE

A MOONLIGHT STUDY AT CRIANLARICH. Twenty-minute exposure at 2.8, fast film, Contax Camera

CALEDONIAN FIRS AT LOCH TULLA NEAR BRIDGE OF ORCHY

For many centuries the great Moor of Rannoch lay like a barrier athwart the land, lonely and desolate. Now the new road, of easy gradients and wide corners, takes one quickly over this great tract of peat, heather, and bog. A little loch comes into view as the road turns towards Glencoe, and Loch Tulla (page 8) is a fisherman's delight.

Glen Orchy (page 10) branches off the Moor, and we are in the land where the giants and heroes of Ossian's tales passed and repassed.

Never worry if the weather be bad in Glencoe, its full awesomeness and its eerie beauties are best seen when darkness is falling, and the mists roll down the mountainside. On such a day can best be pictured the full horror of the flight of the survivors from the February Massacre, over the mountains to safety in Glen Etive.

Glencoe (pages 11, 12, 13) is now largely in the hands of the National Trust for Scotland, and its mountains and corries are open at all times to the camper, tramper, and the mountaineer.

As Glencoe opens out to Loch Leven and the sea, two ways lie invitingly open.

To the left, the little village of Ballachulish (page 16) meets one with its slate quarries from which half the roofs of the West Highlands come. Just beyond the village, where the road turns down into the pleasant pastoral land of Appin, rises Ben A Bheithir (pronounced Vare); and if the green slopes of the mountain tempt the climber, he should beware, for though the dragons who lived there were killed long ago, did they not leave two whelps behind in the fastnesses of Corrie Lia?

The Stewart Kings of Scotland were great huntsmen, and to please James IV., Duncan Stewart of Appin built Castle Stalker (page 14) that picturesque square tower whose ruins stand so commandingly on Eilean an Stalcaire (The Hunter's Island), looking out to sea.

Back again to Glencoe, and turning to the right, a wonderful road tempts the traveller. From the road one sees Eilean Munde, another burial island, on Loch Leven. The road circles the Loch, passing through industrial Kinlochleven, by wooded Callart to the narrows of Ballachulish (page 16) and then to the lovely wooded, sunny country of Nether Lochaber, where snowdrops blossom in mid January and roses last into December. Then we come to Corran at sunset (page 18).

MIST-CAPPED BEN CRUACHAN AND THE RIVER ORCHY

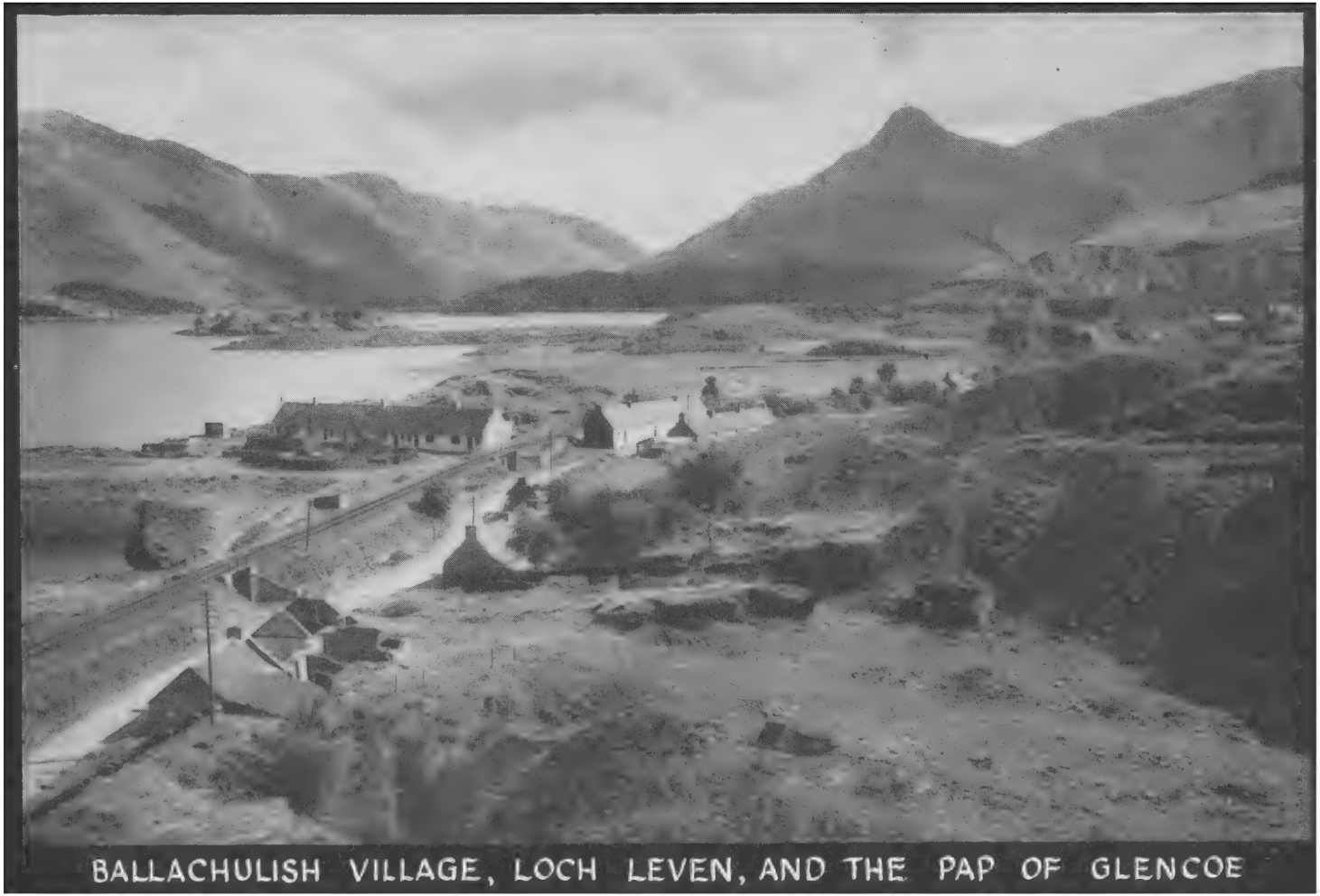
A WINTRY SCENE AT KINGSHOUSE, GLENCOE, BUCHAILLE ETIVE MOR IN BACKGROUND

Page 12 IN THE HEART OF GLENCOE, LOOKING TO GEARR AONACH AND AONACH DHU

TORREN LOCHAN, NEAR CLACHAIG, WITH STOB COIRE NAN LOCHAN TOWERING ABOVE

AFTERNOON SUNSHINE ON CASTLE STALKER APPIN

Looking to the Burial Isle on Loch Leven, and Bidean Nam Bian, the highest hill in Argyllshire



BALLACHULISH VILLAGE, LOCH LEVEN, AND THE PAP OF GLENCOE

THE NARROWS, LOCH LEVEN, NEAR KINLOCHLEVEN

SUNSET CLOUDS OVER CORRAN FERRY

BEECH AVENUE AT ARDGOUR

FORT WILLIAM, LOCH LINNHE, AND BEN NEVIS (4406 feet high)

Pause here for a moment, and remember how the first Maclean leapt ashore on to the Ardgour bank, and wrested the land from the Macmasters, and cross the ferry to see the noble avenue of beeches (page 19) his descendants have planted.

The next stop is Fort William (page 20).

From across Loch Linnhe, the town can best be seen, crouching under the hills that rise up to mighty Ben Nevis. Ugly and industrial as it may be, it has a long history behind it. First a fort to keep the King's Peace in an unruly land, then a small but busy little commercial town, importing gin from the West Indies and brandy from France. It still kept its importance during the grim years that followed the '45, for from it sailed emigrant ships to Nova Scotia and Australia, till in 1894 the railway brought the summer visitor, and between the wars hydro-electric power and aluminium came to give new life after years of depression.

Tradition says that the meaning of Nevis is Heaven—it may be, but it is certain that Glen Nevis is one of the loveliest of glens. Our pictures show but two of its many aspects, and though the road seems to end in the picture on page 23, the walker can pass through a narrow beautiful gorge, to wend his way over some of the wildest and most desolate country in Scotland to Corrour Station on the Moor of Rannoch. Just out of the picture on page 22, and on the hill to the right, is a curious vitrified fort, about which men still quarrel as to whether its stones were melted by volcanic action or by the hand of man.

Some three miles from Fort William stands the modern Castle of Inverlochy (page 26). Built about a hundred years ago by the first Lord Abinger, its position is unique. In front runs the River Lochy, behind towers Ben Nevis. Queen Victoria stayed there in 1873, and old people still tell of that visit.

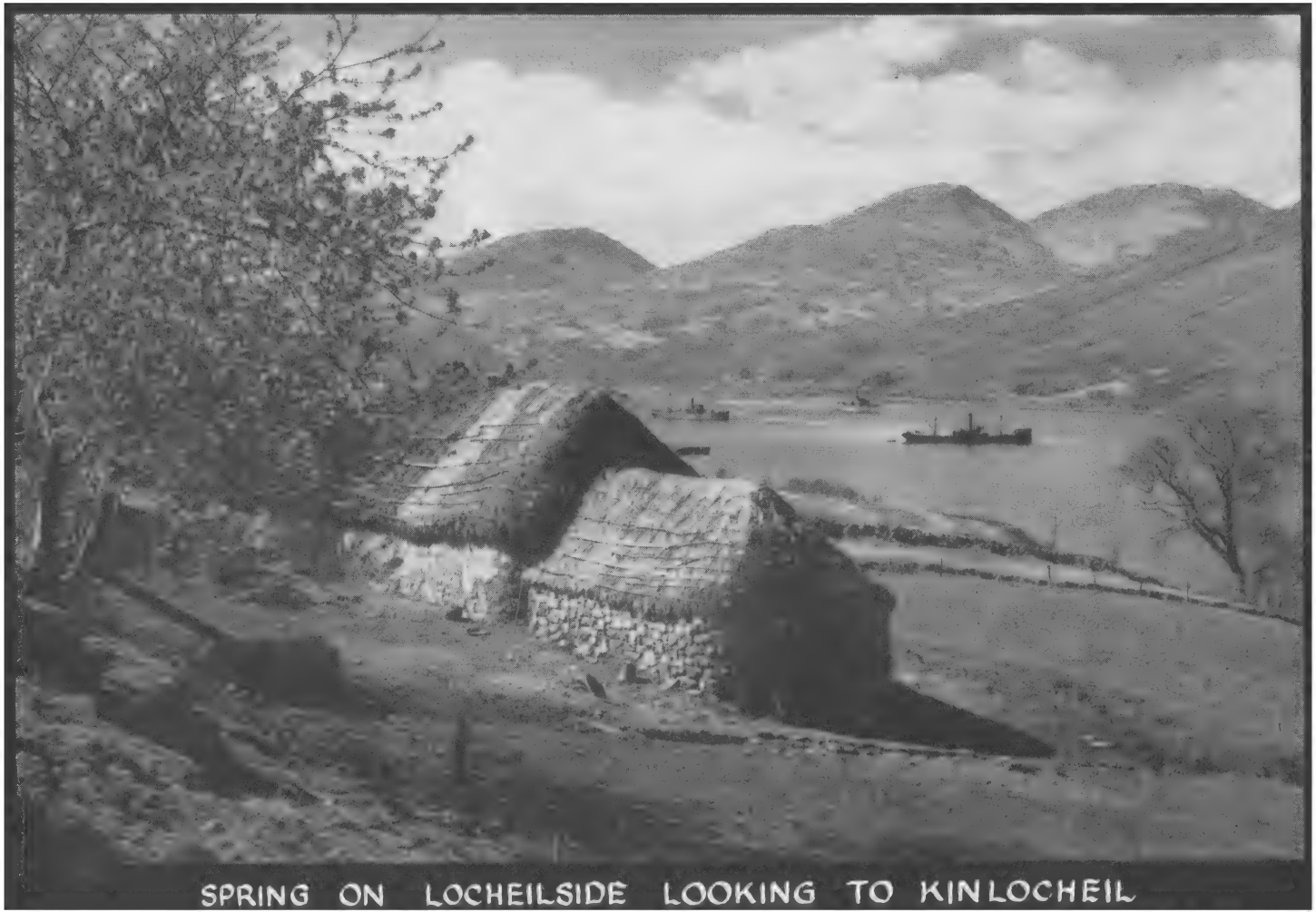
From Banavie, the finest view of Ben Nevis and its north face is to be had (page 27), and at Corpach is the entrance to the Caledonian Canal that joins Loch Linnhe with the North Sea.

There was a song written during the Kaiser's War by a homesick Gael, and the swing of its words, and the lilt of its air, has raised the " Road to the Isles " to a high place among the folk songs of a music-loving people. There are lovely lands in the world, and there may be more famous beauty spots, but the " Road to the Isles " leads us to Fairyland.

Page 22

SGURR A' MHAIM, GLEN NEVIS

WHERE THE ROAD ENDS, UPPER GLEN NEVIS


SPRING ON LOCHEILSIDE LOOKING TO KINLOCHEIL

ROUND THE PEAT FIRE, IN A CROFTER'S COTTAGE IN THE HIGHLANDS

INVERLOCHY CASTLE AND BEN NEVIS

After Banavie the road runs along Loch Eil, and tucked away at its head the Navy kept stores on boats anchored out in the loch. The boats still remain to tell of strenuous years (page 24). Next comes Glenfinnan and Loch Shiel (page 28). Here, where the monument to those who fought and fell for " Royal Charlie " stands, began that great adventure that ended so tragically at Culloden. Here also, passed the followers of the Lords of the Isles, and here, during the troubled years of 1940–45, men of all nations trained to be the Commandos, whose deeds have yet to find their Bard.

Over the pass from Glenfinnan lies Loch Eilt (page 29), with its many islets. One such men call " Clanranald's Isle," but on old maps it is marked " Eilean Fata " (Long Island). On it there are now only five trees, but once there were many more, for when in 1746 the stragglers came slipping back to their homes, hunted by Cumberland's men, none dared raise a cairn to the " Lad that's awa'," or to the men who, following him, would never return. So on these islands trees were planted, and through 200 years they have kept green the memory of the loyal, nameless clansmen who marched over the hills to Glenfinnan to " fight and die for Charlie."

BEN NEVIS FROM NEAR BANAVIE. The 2000-ft. cliffs, well known to mountaineers, can be clearly seen

LOCH SHIEL AND THE MONUMENT TO PRINCE CHARLES

Then passing Loch Ailort and Loch nan Uamh, is the Bay of Arisaig (page 30). Here the mountains drop down to black rocks and silver sands, and the green, grey, ever-changing Atlantic, with Eigg, Rum, and Skye across the sea, seem the beginning of Tir-nan-Og, where man stays young for ever.

A few miles farther on is Loch Morar (page 31), as deep as the Pacific, as lovely as Loch nan Uamh, now the centre of one of the smaller schemes of the North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board.

The ancient name of the country that lies to the south of the Road to the Isles was the " Rough Bounds," and to this day Moidart is rugged, mountainous, and very sparsely populated. Few roads cross it, and communications are kept by boat up and down its deeply indented coastline. Loch Moidart (page 33) is one of these deep sea lochs, guarded at its mouth by Castle Tirrim, but running back into a countryside given over to deer, sheep, and heather. Farther down the coast in Ardnamurchan, is Kilmory (page 32), with its traditions of Columbian missionary monks, and its churchyard with curiously carved gravestones. A lovely, little-known countryside, with a warm, pleasant climate and a kindly crofter population.

REFLECTIONS, LOCH EILT

SUNSET GLORY OVER RUM AND EIGG, AS SEEN FROM ARISAIG

MORAR CHURCH, LOCH MORAR

SPRINGTIME AT KILMORY VILLAGE, ARDNAMURCHAN LOOKING TO RUM AND EIGG

A LITTLE-KNOWN SCENIC GEM, LOCH MOIDART

MORNING MISTS ABOVE LOCH LOCHY FROM NEAR LAGGAN LOCKS

Looking to Aonach Mor, Carn Mor Dearg, and Ben Nevis, all over 4000 ft., from Blarour Church, Spean Bridge

LOCH ARKAIG NEAR THE DARK MILE

Glen Albyn, the Great Glen of Scotland, was a highway even before Columba and his monks dragged their coracles over the land from loch to loch. The modern trunk road to Inverness passes through the Glen, now climbing high up the hillside as at Blarour (page 35) to look down on the Parish Church of Kilmonivaig—the largest parish in Scotland—now dropping to the edge of Loch Lochy (page 34).

Branching from Loch Lochy, and joined to it by the River Arkaig, is Loch Arkaig (page 36), hidden in woods. Somewhere on these shores lie buried the remains of the great store of Louis D'Ors, sent by the French King, that arrived too late to finance the '45; but now none know where to find them.

The first great glen that branches westward from Glen Albyn is Glen Garry, and here, at the edge of Loch Oich (page 38), still standing proudly on the Rock of the Raven, is the ruined castle of Invergarry. Burned down by Cumberland's men in 1746, the castle and the burial ground were not sold with the rest of the property, and are all that are left to the descendants of the proud race of MacDonells of Glengarry.

Passing down the Glen is Loch Garry (page 39), a lovely loch, beloved of fishermen, and still surrounded by well-wooded hills. These woods were always famous, for not only were there once charcoal smelting furnaces here, but the only ship ever built at Fort William was made from Glengarry firwoods and was called the "Lady of Glengarry." Just beyond Loch Garry is Loch Poulary, or the Loch of the Pool of the Shielings, where of old the cattle were driven, and the crofters went with them to live in the lone shielings during the long summer days.

On the narrow neck of land that divides Loch Oich from Loch Ness, stands Fort Augustus (page 40). Once the cell of a Columban monk, as its Gaelic name of Cillechumein testifies, the fort, built to link with the forts at Fort William and Inverness, has also passed away, and now Benedictine monks have a Boys' School where the soldiers once drilled.

LOCH OICH IN THE GREAT GLEN, INVERGARRY IN FOREGROUND AND LOCH NESS IN THE DISTANCE

BIRCH TREES, LOCH GARRY

LOCH NESS AND FORT AUGUSTUS

A CALM WINTER DAY ON LOCH POULARY, NEAR TOMDOUN

INVERNESS FROM TOMNAHURICH

Glen Moriston (pages 44, 45) leads from Loch Ness westward to the open sea. Like Glen Garry, its river is famous for its fish, and here in 1746 a party of Cumberland's troops, searching for the fugitive Prince Charlie, saw a young man, his very double. Him they slew, and, dying, he gasped out, "You have killed your Prince." The head was taken to Fort Augustus, where it proved to be that of Roderick Mackenzie. Yet, by his death, he stayed for a little while the pursuit of the man he had so willingly followed to Culloden.

The main road passes Glen Moriston, and just at the mouth of Glen Urquhart stands another of the ruined castles that dot the countryside. Castle Urquhart was built in the twelfth century, and played its part in all the wars of a troubled land. Now cared for by the Office of Works, its ruined towers look down on Loch Ness. If the day be fine and sunny, the famous Loch Ness monster may rush by like two upturned boats, leaving a tremendous wake behind. There have been stories of a monster in Loch Ness from the times of folk-lore. Perhaps one day scientists will be able to explain the nature of the creature so many have seen, and in which so many still disbelieve.

Standing at the northern end of the Great Glen on the shores of the Moray Firth, Inverness by virtue of its position and its ancient history has every right to its title of the Capital of the Highlands. Always a centre of government and of trade, its burghers, going quietly about their business, saw most of the armies that marched up and down Glen Albyn. They welcomed the victors, they succoured the fugitives. Culloden, which struck the death-blow to the Stuart cause, is but a few miles away, St Columba came to Inverness to visit the Pictish King Brude; also the house in which stayed Mary, Queen of Scots, is still to be seen. Doctor Johnson passed through, and to-day men come from every glen and island of the north, to transact business, to shop, to meet each other in its busy streets, or stroll along the pleasant walks by the River Ness and its many islands.

Glen Affric (pages 48 and 49) is by common consent one of the loveliest of Highland glens. Here are the remains of that great forest that once covered all Caledonia. Here river, loch, and mountain make one lovely picture after another. Soon, to its beauty will be added the knowledge that from its waters, power for one of the larger hydro-electric schemes will be taken.

In the country that lies to north of Glen Moriston

ON THE RIVER MORISTON, GLEN MORISTON

is Glen Shiel (pages 50 and 51). Wild and lonely now, though in June 1719 it rang to the clash of arms, when troops from Inverness met and crushed an abortive attempt on the part of James III. and VIII. to regain the throne of his fathers.

From Loch Shiel, over the pass, Loch Duich (page 52) and the Sisters of Kintail tempt the walker and the climber.

Across the ferry at the Kyle of Loch Alsh is Skye (pages 53, 54, and 55).

To try and condense into one short paragraph a really satisfactory account of the "Isle of Mist" is manifestly impossible. History meets you at Portree, the King's Harbour, where Stuart Kings landed, Flora MacDonald lies buried in Kilmuir after a long and adventurous life. Tradition and folk tales are bound up in the Fairy Flag at Dunvegan, while the Memorial Cairn at Borroray tells of the famous School of Piping founded and carried on by the MacCrimmons. The mountaineer knows the Coolin, the walker the secret glens, the artist at every turn is met with a different scene. Man of action or dreamer, scholar or holiday maker, over them all Skye casts her spell, a spell that is never broken.

Mull is another lovely island, grassy and fertile. Castle Duart (page 57) is one of the strongholds of

HURRYING WATERS, RIVER MORISTON

URQUHART CASTLE, LOCH NESS

Clan Maclean, but for many years it had passed into alien hands. Bought back by the late Sir Fitzroy Maclean, it was a proud day in 1912 when the venerable Chief was able to welcome the assembled clansmen with "Ceud Mile Failte" (one hundred thousand welcomes). He died shortly before the war at the great age of 101.

Tucked away in the open Atlantic is a little-visited island—Tiree (page 58). It is very flat, but sunny and fertile, and there are few more pleasant places to laze away the idle hours than in a sheltered nook among the rocks of its wide sandy bays. An ideal spot for a holiday in June. It is bright with flowers, and its Pictish Brochs and Standing Stones are the lurking places of fairies, of brownies, and of kelpies—or so men say.

When St Columba sailed away from Ireland, he sought a resting place where he could no longer see his native land, and he found it in Iona, where he landed in May 563. And from that day the Island has stood for all that is highest and noblest in Scottish Christianity. The Abbey Church (page 59) was burned to the ground many times in the course of its history, but about 1203 the building began to take its present form. It is now in the care of the Iona Community of the Church of Scotland, who are gradually restoring the ancient

WINTER SUN IN GLEN CANNICH

REMNANTS OF THE OLD CALEDONIAN FOREST, LOCH AFFRIC
PROBABLY THE FINEST GLEN IN SCOTLAND

buildings to their original purposes, so that Columba's prophecy might be fulfilled:—

> " In Iona of my heart, Iona of my love,
> Instead of monks' voices shall be the lowing of cattle,
> But were the world come to an end,
> Iona shall be as it was."

All men must pass through Oban during their travels in the West Highlands, for here the steamers go out to the Islands, and the railway takes them down to Glasgow and the south.

Oban was a small fishing village, but, with the opening of the Customs House, gradually increased in size. Efforts made during the last years of the eighteenth and first of the nineteenth centuries to develop deep sea fishing in the Highlands helped it, and with the prosperous days of Queen Victoria, when its bay was full of yachts, and the lodges and castles of the hinterland filled with house parties, the town spread round the bay. But perhaps its most romantic days were those during the last war, when sailors, soldiers, and airmen thronged its streets, and typewriters in its requisitioned hotels tapped out strange tales of doings far out to sea, while the Battle of the Atlantic was being fought and won.

THE DOG FALLS, GLEN AFFRIC

SUMMER IN GLEN SHIEL ON THE ROAD TO SKYE

WINTER IN GLEN SHIEL, LOOKING TO SGURR NA SGINE AND THE SADDLE

AUTUMN ON LOCH DUICH, LOOKING TO THE FIVE SISTERS OF KINTAIL

SGURR ALASDAIR AND THE COOLIN RIDGE FROM GLEN BRITTLE, SKYE

THE COOLIN FROM ELGOL, SKYE

SGURR NAN GILLEAN AND THE SLIGACHAN BURN, SKYE

From Oban it is but a short step to the Pass of Brander and the land of the Campbells. Here a great battle was fought between Robert the Bruce and the Lord of Lorne. Over the Pass is Ben Cruachan, and beyond it the country opens out to Loch Awe (page 62). With the old castles and older chapels that dot its shores, its story is as romantic as any of the Highland lochs. It, too, has a monster, shaped like a horse with twelve legs, though none have seen it for many a year. Still when the loch is frozen, and the noise of the cracking of ice comes to the little crofts, men say that the monster is stirring on its bed.

From Loch Awe we visit Inveraray, the home of the great Dukes of Argyll; the town has a quaint old world air. It escaped the troubles that followed the '45, and went on its quiet way. Springtime finds the daffodils a-blowing in its castle grounds (page 63), and all now is peace and order, though the stones of the great pile could tell many a grim tale of a feudal past.

It is fitting that the last picture in the book should take us away from the coast, to the high land that lies on the march of the districts of Lochaber and Badenoch. Loch Laggan lies about nine miles from Fort William, on the main road to Kingussie, in a sparsely populated countryside. In autumn the roar of the stags comes echoing from its mountain passes, and in winter (page 64) the snow lies low down to the water's edge. Through these grim hills the luckless Prince Charlie wandered in the months between Culloden and his departure for France, but now, at the far end of the loch, is the great stone dam built by the British Aluminium Company to store the water that is conducted through the 15 mile long tunnel to the works at the foot of Ben Nevis. After heavy rain, the sight of the surplus water dashing through the funnels in the great concrete wall of the dam is as awe-inspiring as the wild mountains around.

And with Loch Laggan a farewell must be said to the West Highlands with all its wealth of scenery, its store of history and of legend, its appeal to the scholar, the climber, the tramper, and to the tourist —a farewell said, and a promise to come again to the LAND OF THE BENS, THE GLENS, AND THE HEROES.

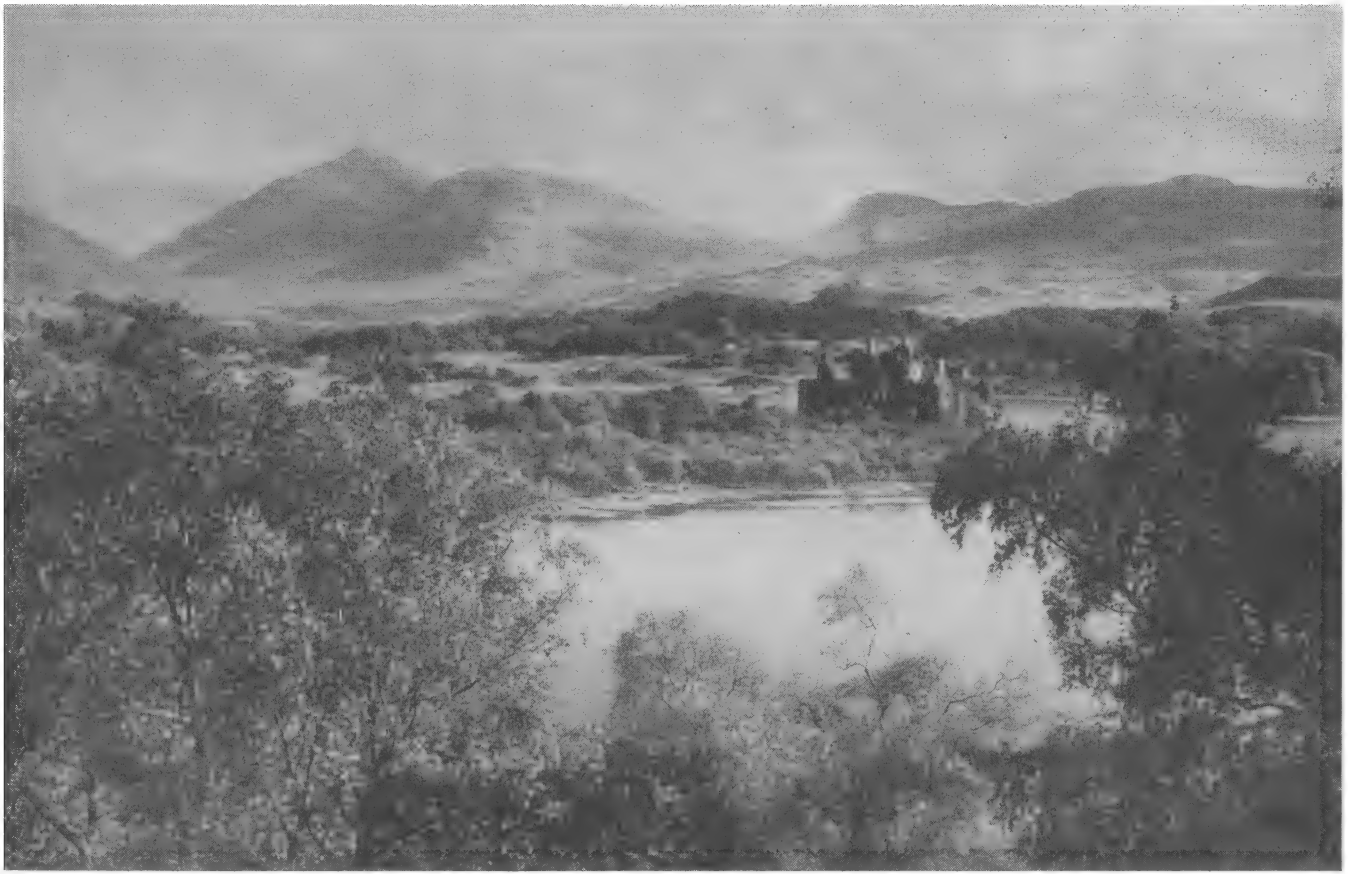
DUART CASTLE, MULL

BY THE BURN, KILKENNETH, TIREE

THE ABBEY, IONA

MULL FROM DUN I, IONA

SWEET OBAN BAY



LOCH AWE, KILCHURN CASTLE AND BEN LUI

SPRING IN THE GROUNDS OF INVERARAY CASTLE, LOOKING TO THE TOWN

WINTER CALM ON LOCH LAGGAN
CRAIG MEAGAIDH (MEGGIE) AND COIRE ARDAIR IN DISTANCE

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